

Buckhead Business Association announces awards, new officers

By Everett Catts

Neighbor Newspapers News Editor

The Buckhead Business Association honored the community's top businesses and announced its new officers at its annual luncheon Jan. 17 at the Atlanta History Center.

Savor Specialty Foods and Tabletop was named 2007 Buckhead Business of the Year. Runners-up were Beacham & Co., Realtors, PGA Tour Superstore, Prriya & Chintans Couture & Jewelry Boutique and Seasons 52.

Savor donates items or gift certificates to Camp Twin Lakes, Zoo Atlanta, the Shepherd Center, the High Museum of Art and the Nature Conservancy. January Hodgson, owner of Savor, was thrilled with the award.

"It is an honor," she said.



Muzel Chen/Staff

Above left, Savor Specialty Foods wins the Buckhead Business Association's Business of the Year award, with, from left, Ren Hodgson receiving the award from Karen Walker on behalf of his wife, January Hodgson. Above right, Majed Awamleh of Buckhead Cleaning and Janitorial Services gets the Entrepreneur of the Year award from Ms. Walker. Below left, association President Peter Rooney addresses the crowd.

"It's great to be a small business and to be recognized. Every little bit helps as we get our name out there.

"We're just very excited. It's another good thing for the Buckhead community."

Association Executive Director Sharon Silva, one of the award judges, added, "It was ... truly a community-grown business with enthusi-

asm for the community with a strong desire to grow within the community."

Buckhead Cleaning and Janitorial Services was named 2007 Entrepreneur of the Year, a new award created to honor businesspeople. Owner Majed Awamleh left a career as a certified financial planner for Mass Mutual Financial Group in April 2005 to found the

company. "It feels really good," he said of the award. "I'm very honored and happy for my employees, really, more than anything. This recognition belongs to them."

Ms. Silva added, "We were compelled by his sense of entrepreneurial spirit leaving the financial industry to start something totally different, on his own, which would serve

the community and develop into a community employer as well as provide a high level of service to the community."

In other news, officers were elected by the association's board of directors and members. Geoff Friedman, last

year's president, handed the gavel to Peter Rooney, the 2008 president. Elizabeth Gill was named president-elect and will serve as president next year. Awamleh is the secretary and Nancy Sobin is the treasurer for 2008.